



## **The New Hampshire Soil Tunnel**

### *Set up Instructions*

The soil tunnel structure consists of five pieces of ½" plywood that fit together with hook and eye bolts. The sides are approximately 72" X 36" and the ends are approximately 36" X 36". The "roof" of the tunnel fits over the top to close in the structure and make it dark. To set up the soil tunnel, follow these steps (it's a one-person job!):

1. Lay down a piece of plastic where the tunnel will be situated. This protects the students from the ground or floor and helps them slide right through easily.
2. Put an end piece and a side piece together to form an "L" and fasten them together with the hook and eye. There are two hook and eyes for each corner of the structure, so make sure these are both fastened to ensure stability.
3. Hook together the remaining pieces in the same manner, making sure all 8 hook and eyes are fastened. If there is any trouble getting some hooks to fit into their associated eyebolt, it is quite possible that the two end pieces have to be switched. This has happened before and switching the ends fixes the fit.
4. Gently lay the "roof" on top, then fasten to the walls by looping the rawhide ties through the holes at each corner and tie tightly. The soil tunnel structure should now be stabilized.
5. There is a large cloth that drapes over the top of the tunnel structure to further block light and cover the walls. This should be oriented with the long green "grass" along the top and the colored "soil horizons" should match up roughly with the ends of the tunnel.
6. There are many items that go on the walls inside the tunnel that get removed for transport. These include cloth worms, bugs, carrots, etc. These are in the box that comes with the tunnel and should be stuck on with Velcro – the location of these things inside is flexible! Also, the kids like to take on and off these items (not necessarily encouraged, but not discouraged either), so some Velcro maintenance will be required.
7. There are also some items in the box that go on the grass surface (to give kids a hint as to what lies below). These include the large ladybug, flowers, a toilet, carrot tops, and extra rocks. The toilet should be placed over the septic system below, and the carrot tops should be placed over the carrots that hang from the ceiling. The flowers can be stuck in the holes that are in the centerpiece of the "roof" of the tunnel (gently force the fabric through the holes to make flowers stand up).
8. Flashlights should be in the box as well. These are given to the kids as they enter and retrieved when they exit. And make sure they aren't taking any souvenirs off the walls!
9. HAVE FUN!!! The soil tunnel is exhilarating for both the kids crawling through and the people guiding them through.

***For more information on the program or volunteer opportunities with the New Hampshire Soil Tunnel contact Laura Morton (603) 868-7581 Ext. 104 or [lmorton@nh.nrcs.usda.gov](mailto:lmorton@nh.nrcs.usda.gov)***